

PARTNERS, NOT COMPETITORS?
REGION MUST WORK TOGETHER: DEXTER {page 4}



POLICE PROBE SUSPICIOUS DEATH
AUTOPSY ON BODY INCONCLUSIVE {page 5}

UNHAPPY ANNIVERSARY
A YEAR OF SCANDAL FOR TIGER {page 29}



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Country. Reid



▶ Canadian country singing star Johnny Reid, left, performs last night at the Halifax Metro Centre.

DARRELL OAKE/FOR METRO

Love is a place called Halifax

Reid sang to a sold-out audience in his final stop on his A Place Called Love tour. The show was also taped by PBS for a special on Reid.

And the moral of the story is ...

What John Mazerolle learned from a sucker punch {page 14}

Grooming, games, gadgets

Our holiday gift guide, brought to you by letter 'G' {pages 22-27}

Food bank's shelves are stocked again

- Parker Street confident supplies from Sobeys, Allied Reclamation will be enough to meet demand
- 'Miscommunication' between Sobeys, Allied blamed for temporarily cutting off supplies



ALEX BOUTILIER
@METRONEWS.CA

There was a marked difference in Mel Boutilier's voice yesterday.

On Tuesday, the Order of Canada recipient was facing the possibility of closing the Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank as early as next week.

But yesterday, after receiving a truckload of food and supplies from an Allied Reclamation warehouse in Dartmouth, it looks like Parker Street's doors will stay open.

Boutilier, the food bank's executive director, said he received a call early yesterday from two Sobeys representatives. They informed Boutilier the decision to deal exclusively with Feed Nova Scotia — and not the independent Parker Street — was due to "miscommunication," and had been remedied.

"We were really saddened and not knowing where to turn when all this happened," Boutilier said.

The trouble started earlier this month, when Parker Street heard from third-party sources that Allied, which supplies about 80 per cent of the food bank's stocks, had cut it off.

Staff at Allied Reclamation confirmed early yesterday morning they were under orders not to give Parker Street any Sobeys products.

But Boutilier was assured the miscommunication had been cleared up. He sent a truck to the Allied warehouse, and it returned full.

"It's a great relief for us," said Boutilier.

The resolution came just in time, Boutilier said — when staff took inventory of their remaining supplies yesterday, they had about seven days' worth left.

A representative from Sobeys did not respond to interview requests yesterday.

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 3

Feed Nova Scotia's reply

- Feed Nova Scotia executive director Dianne Swinemar said yesterday that suggestions Parker Street's supplies were to be redirected to her organization, as a result of a meeting between herself and a Sobeys representative, were "misinformation."
- "I have not heard from Sobeys, from Allied, from anyone that (Parker Street) was cut off," she said.

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What a relief, says Sloane

Area councillor overjoyed Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank is staying open ◐ Executive director says 100 people use food bank every day

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO



▶ Chris Riley sorts through his groceries outside the Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank yesterday morning.



ALY THOMSON
HALIFAX@METRONEWS.CA

Dawn Sloane let out a sigh of relief after hearing that the Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank is remaining open.

"It's great because they give so much to this community and aid so many people that need their services," said the area's councillor late yesterday, after word came that Parker Street's food supplier would continue delivering goods to the privately run food bank on Maynard Street.

"They need this help, and it's so great because it's in an area that has a lot of individuals that need aid."

Sloane said she can now cancel previous plans to try to save the well-known and much-used food bank.

"We were thinking about sending letters to Sobeys and basically starting a campaign to help them out," she said.

Before hearing the good news yesterday, some Parker Street Food Bank users spoke in dire terms about what the closure would mean to them.

"It would pretty much put me out," Chris Riley said while packing crackers and canned food into his backpack yesterday morning. "It's hard to find food in the city, especially cheap, affordable food that isn't horrible for you."

99,447 bags of groceries were distributed by the food bank in 2009.

Parker Street said it helped more than 16,400 people in 2009, distributing more than $1.7 million in groceries.

Police defuse standoff

A standoff with police in Spryfield ended peacefully early yesterday evening.

Halifax Regional Police said a 62-year-old Halifax man was taken into custody without incident just after 6 p.m., following a four-hour standoff with officers outside a home.

Police said that just before 2 p.m. they were called to the 0–100 block of Old Sambro Road regarding a weapons complaint.

According to police spokesman Const. Brian Palmeter, they had reason to believe there was an agitated man inside who was in possession of a gun.

The emergency-response team arrived and communicated with the man, who left the home just after 6 p.m.

Police are now investigating the incident and, as of press time, were waiting for a warrant to search the home last night.

The man was still in custody last night and no decision had been made on possible charges.

PHILIP CROUCHER

Closure

▶ Old Sambro Road between Herring Cove Road and North West Arm Drive was closed to traffic during the standoff.

School board re-elects chairman

Irvine Carvery has been re-elected as chair of the Halifax Regional School Board.

In a vote by fellow board meetings at its regular monthly meeting last night, Carvery was elected to a third consecutive term in office. METRO

1 news

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Atlantic region must get along: Premier

N.S. is 'at a turning point': Dexter
Premier touts N.L. energy deal in speech to Chamber of Commerce

ALEX BOUTILIER
@METRONEWS.CA

Premier Darrell Dexter used his second "state of the province" address to reiterate his message of regional co-operation.

Dexter told a crowd of about 400 at a Halifax Chamber of Commerce luncheon yesterday that co-operation is paramount to the success of the region of about 2.3 million.

"Our four provinces succeed when we view each other as partners rather than competitors," he said.

"As partners, we can win a greater advantage for all Atlantic Canadians."

It's a message the government has been stressing in the wake of brokering a $6-billion power deal between Nova Scotia Power and Newfoundland's Nalcor last week.

The good parts

During his address, Dexter pointed to several highlights of his government thus far, including the recently announced jobsHere program, supporting the proposed new convention centre, and the NSPI/Nalcor deal.

Chamber president Valerie Payn praised the deal, telling Dexter her organization was "with (him) all the way," before adding they'll continue to ask the government "the tough questions."

After his speech, Dexter told reporters he wants to discuss region-wide programs when Atlantic Canada's four premiers gather in Pictou this weekend.

"I think we just need to keep looking for the opportunities of an aggregated 2.3-million person population," he said, offering a region-wide venture capital fund and a carbon-offset program as possibilities.

"(The region is) a much more powerful market than 990,000. So this is where we have to look for our advantages."

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO



▶ Premier Darrell Dexter gives the state of the province address at the Marriott Harbourfront Hotel yesterday.

It's not just about co-operation: Opposition

While regional co-operation emerged as a new refrain for the Dexter government, the opposition parties were not without narratives of their own.

Liberal Leader Stephen McNeil accused the government of overstating its role in the Nova Scotia Power-Nalcor deal announced last week, while neglecting what he considers a more pressing issue: Tax structure.

"We are losing job after job after job, because we as an economy are not competitive," McNeil told reporters.

"Unless we stand up and look squarely in the eye of the problem that's our tax system. We need to make strategic changes so that we are creating jobs."

Progressive Conservative Leader Jamie Baillie took issue with the suggestion in Dexter's speech that, if a company wants to create sustainable jobs, they can call the premier's office for suggestions on government programs to help.

"Apparently now in Nova Scotia, if you have a good business idea, you're supposed to call the premier's office and government will look after you," said Baillie, adding that he hoped the province's job strategy would include competitive tax structures, not more programs.

"I don't believe that's what Nova Scotians want."

ALEX BOUTILIER

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO FILE



▶ Liberal Leader Stephen McNeil

Premier's pointed response

Both Baillie and McNeil continued their critiques during question period.

One of Baillie's questions received a particularly barbed response from the premier.

"We have a three-step process (for job creation)," Dexter said. "Step 1, get rid of the government that was there; Step 2, put in place this cabinet; Step 3, put in place a real economic development strategy."

N.S. pledges clarity in cases of cruelty

The Nova Scotia government is moving to clarify the powers and duties of its inspectors in animal cruelty cases.

Agriculture Minister John MacDonell says the proposed amendments to the Animal Protection Act are the result of enforcement "gaps" that have been cited by inspectors since the Act's proclamation in January. He says the changes would define investigative techniques inspectors can use including taking samples, seizing carcasses or taking photographs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cops seek aid solving robbery

Police are looking for tips on a robbery at a Needs on Herring Cove on Sept. 27. The suspect was wearing dark jeans and a yellow and black windbreaker at the time. Call police or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-8477. METRO

CONTRIBUTED



▶ The suspect is described as six feet tall with a slim build.

Give more help to poor kids: Group

A national research organization says governments need to do more to fight child poverty in Nova Scotia. In its annual report, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives says 14,000 children in the province were living in poverty in 2008 based on the most recent available data.

The organization says despite a downward trend in child poverty rates since 2003, the problem is far from being solved. The report notes the most vulnerable children continue to live in families that rely on welfare. THE CANADIAN PRESS

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO



▶ Halifax Regional Police continue their investigation of the suspicious death of a woman on Princeton Lane in Dartmouth yesterday.

Investigation continues in suspicious death

- Autopsy conducted yesterday was inconclusive
- Police remain on scene in Dartmouth neighbourhood

Halifax Regional Police said further tests are required to determine the cause of death of a 59-year-old Dartmouth woman.

Shortly after 4 p.m. Tuesday, police were called to assist paramedics regarding the death of a woman at 6 Princeton Lane. Halifax Regional Police spokesman Const. Brian Palmeter said "somebody" had returned home and found the woman dead.

"Anytime we have a death outside of a hospital that the cause of death is not known ... in absence of any other evidence to explain why this person has died, we treat it as suspicious until we can rule it otherwise," he said.

Alarming

Police spokesman Const. Brian Palmeter says they will remain on the scene until investigators "are comfortable in that we no longer need it."

Grant Naugler, who lives on the street, said he didn't personally know who occupies the home, but said the residents moved there in early summer and did a lot work on the front of the house.

Naugler said he doesn't remember seeing a woman, but remembered complimenting a man on the work during a walk with this wife.

"It's alarming for any neighbourhood," he said from his front door yesterday. ALY THOMSON

DARTMOUTH

32 car thefts this month

Night-crawling car burglars have been hitting Dartmouth over the past month.

Dartmouth has seen 32 car thefts since Nov. 1, Halifax Regional Police said in a release yesterday. Spokesman Const. Brian Palmeter said about a dozen cars were stolen from north-end Dartmouth, leading police to believe the incidents are related.

"That is pretty strong evidence to suggest that they would likely be connected," he said.

All incidents occurred overnight, and the majority of cases involved older cars. Palmeter said all of the vehicles stolen from the north end have been recovered, as well as most of the other thefts.

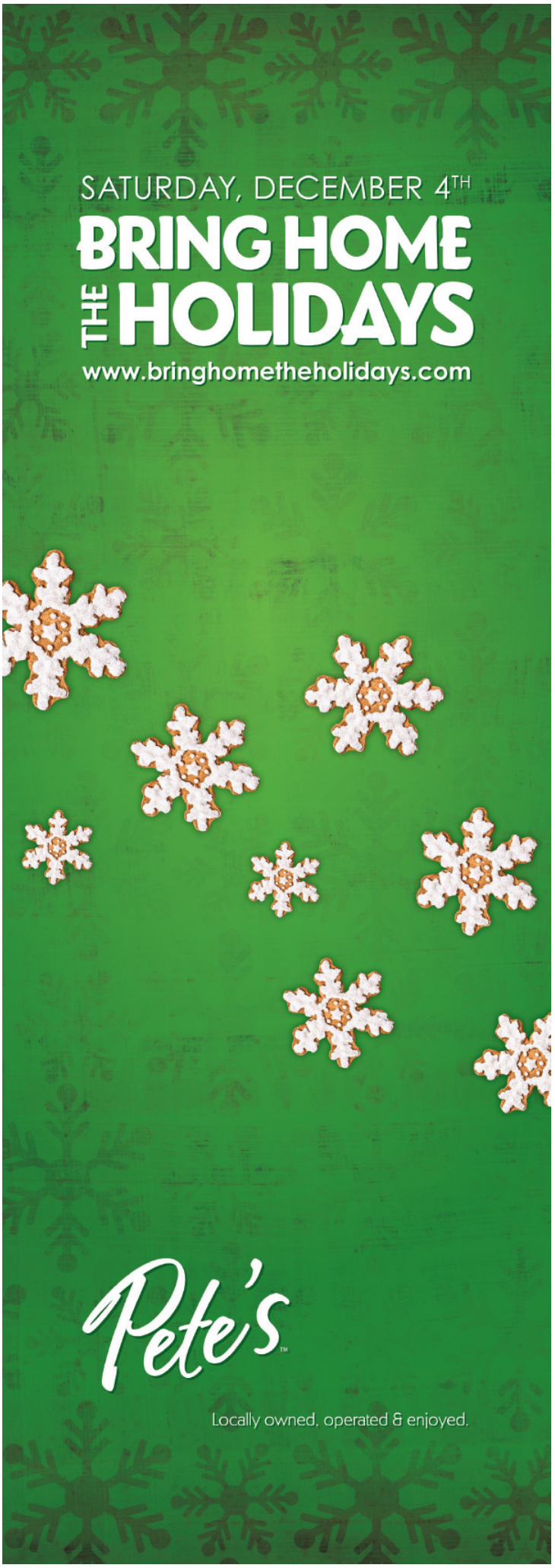
He said there are no suspects at this time. METRO

Water main breaks in west end

Halifax Water crews spent much of yesterday repairing a water-main break in west-end Halifax.

Halifax Water said the break took place in the area of Bayers Road and Desmond Avenue. Repair work was to be completed last evening.

Water continued to flow despite the break, although reduced pressure was a possibility for some customers. METRO



Fly, my pretties, to this Oz-some new production

- The Wizard Of Oz runs at Neptune Theatre from Saturday to Jan. 9
- Musical is based on 1939 film, which was based on 1900 novel

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO



▶ Cast members of The Wizard Of Oz rehearse a scene at Neptune Theatre this week.

JON TATTRIE
HALIFAX@METRONEWS.CA

Neptune Theatre is following the yellow brick road to Oz for its holiday blowout this year.

A cast of singers, dancers, children and a real dog will rip through the 1939 musical version of L. Frank Baum's tale of a tornado-tossed idealist, Dorothy (Blair Irwin), stranded in a strange land populated by witches, scarecrows, tin men and cowardly lions as she tries to make her way back to Kansas.

The cast breaks out show-stopping versions of Over The Rainbow, If I Only Had A Brain and We're Off To See The Wizard during its quest to the Emerald City and the Great and Powerful Oz (Jeremy Webb).

Webb says it's tricky to give people what they want, yet bring your own energy to the classic story.

"The underlying message is for whatever you need in your life, you need only look as far as your backyard and it's probably there — if you chose to unearth it," he says. "I think (people) identify with that."

Webb has directed and acted in the play before, including a previous turn as the Lion.

Want to go?

▶ **Get tickets** at Neptunetheatre.com or call 429-7070.

60 seconds



▶ Ottawa-raised comedian Tom Green performs tonight at Casino Nova Scotia.

TOM GREEN STANDS UP

'IT'S SOMETHING I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO'

Tom Green has done pretty much everything when it comes to entertainment. And now the renowned Canadian funnyman, actor, writer, rapper and talk-show host is coming back to his roots in standup comedy.

Green is touring Nova Scotia this week for his TomGreen.com World Stand-up Comedy Tour, including tonight in Halifax at The Schooner Room at Casino Nova Scotia.

On standup comedy:

"I grew up watching standup and it's something I've always wanted to do. I was doing standup when I was a teenager but I stopped for 15 years and I really have always sort of been pining away to go back and do it again. So this has kind of been an exciting year for me."

On writing material:

"I always start with what makes me laugh. I'm talking about things that have affected my life, talking a lot about technology and talking about a lot of things that have changed in my lifetime, and poking fun at that — our obsession with computers and social networking and our cellphones and how we've all sort of turned into this technologically dependent society that doesn't talk to each other the same way as we did 20 years ago."

On social networking sites:

"I really think that it's a big problem that people are on Facebook. I just cancelled my Facebook page."



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New blast ends last hopes for trapped miners

Police say none could have lived — explosion was 'prolific' All New Zealand cloaked in mourning

Flags of mourning are flying in New Zealand today.

A second powerful blast has ended all hope for the families of 29 New Zealand miners missing underground since last week.

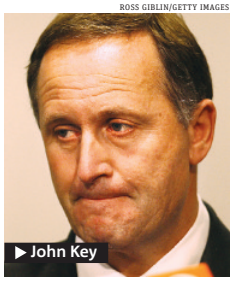
Yesterday's massive explosion deep inside the South Island mine came five days after the men were caught underground by a similar blast.

Even in the unlikely event any survived the first one, police said none could have lived through the second.

"The blast was prolific," said police Supt. Gary Knowles, "just as severe as the first."

Prime Minister John Key

ROSS GIBLIN/GETTY IMAGES



▶ John Key

declared the disaster a national tragedy, and across New Zealand today flags are flying at half staff and many churches have held services for people wanting to show respect.

The second blast happened as rescue teams were in full gear and ready to begin searching.

As families gathered for a daily briefing on the rescue operation, they hoped for the best.

But before Pike River Coal chief Peter Whittall could tell them about the latest blast, some broke into applause when he said a team had been getting ready to go underground — thinking a rescue was about to start.

"I had to wait till they stopped clapping to tell them ... the second explosion occurred."

Some relatives collapsed. Others shouted at the police in anger.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

London. Masked anger



▶ A protester gestures on a stranded police van in Whitehall, London, yesterday.

MATT DUNHAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Forget studies, it's protest time

Students threw their books aside in Britain yesterday and took to the streets to protest tuition fees. Police said 17 people were injured, including two officers, in a demo in London's Whitehall. Besides protests across the country, there have been occupations in at least 12 universities, including Oxford.

22 **The 22-year-old man faces several charges including possession of cocaine and marijuana and impaired driving.**

Double-double shock

A man was in custody after a late-night coffee run in Paris, Ont. He turned up at a coffee shop drive-thru wearing no clothes.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Military families pranked

Wife told over phone husband killed in Afghanistan by an IED

A prankster who made calls to military families with news that their loved ones have been killed in Afghanistan was condemned yesterday by Defence Minister Peter MacKay.

The Canadian military is investigating.

A spokesman for Quebec's CFB Valcartier says several families were targeted, including one soldier's wife to say her husband had been killed by a bomb on the battlefield.

Defence Minister Peter MacKay called such crank calls "despicable."

"Military personnel should not be needlessly worried about their families when they are fighting for our country in faraway lands," MacKay said in a statement yesterday.

MacKay said the Canadian Forces will provide support for the families.

"It is our hope that the perpetrators of this despicable action are brought to justice," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"Military families, who make incredible sacrifices in Canada's name, should never be the target of such an insensitive, amoral and disgusting act."
DEFENCE MINISTER PETER MACKAY

THE CANADIAN PRESS



▶ Peter MacKay

Quebec. Government



▶ Quebec Premier Jean Charest responds to opposition questions over a defiance vote against his government.

JACQUES BOISSINOT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Charest's narrow escape

Jean Charest's government barely survived a confidence vote yesterday in Quebec City. His government has been side-swiped by scandals, and came within a few votes of seeing their majority toppled by a non-confidence motion.

Tough new penalties for drivers in N.B.

10 Drivers in New Brunswick with clean records can accumulate up to 10 penalty points.

Drivers in New Brunswick will not be allowed to use a variety of electronic devices such as hand-held cellphones and global positioning systems under legislation introduced yesterday.

The legislation is intended to reduce the number of accidents that result from distracted driving, Public Safety Minister Robert Trevors said.

"Texting and using cellphones while driving are dangerous behaviours that have become too common," Trevors said.

"Studies show that a significant percentage of collisions are the result of distracted driving, and by introducing this legislation our government is sending a message that distracted driving is not acceptable."

The use of hands-free cellphones would be permitted under the New Brunswick legislation.

Drivers would also be allowed to follow a GPS device but it would be illegal to program or adjust it while driving.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Not tonight, dear, I'm on Facebook

Social media gives kissing the kissoff, says new poll

Should you kiss your partner goodnight or check your Facebook page one last time?

Apparently, Facebook wins.

An Angus Reid survey done for Bacardi found 75 per cent of Canadians who use social media admit the last thing they do at night — and the first thing they do in the morning — is reach for an electronic device and check their emails.

About 80 per cent of people in Toronto or Montreal reach for their cellphones or smartphones rather than their partners.

But late-night romance may fare better in Quebec, where only 9 per cent say they are never without the devices.

Almost one in four Atlantic Canadians report always having their mobile gadget at hand.

But Canadians admit that all the texting, tweeting, Facebook updating and emailing still doesn't take the place of good old face-to-face contact.

Ellen Karp, a social anthropologist and author, is quoted in the Bacardi release as saying: "While social media is quick and efficient, there is no replacement for one-on-one time with close friends and family."

In Montreal, 22 per cent of those using social media say they feel lonely. The national average is 13 per cent.

Still, 40 per cent of social media junkies in Vancouver say they can't imagine life without it.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bitter truth?

- The Angus Reid survey suggests that, perhaps most worrisome for men, more than half of Canadian women between 18 and 44 can't imagine life without reaching out and touching someone — online.

Brazil. Violence on the streets



▶ Police officers go on the alert in Rio's Vila Cruzeiro slum yesterday.

SILVIA IZQUIERDO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The day fear reigned in Rio

Rio de Janeiro, the city Brazil hopes to make a showplace for the 2016 Olympics, erupted in violence yesterday. Heavily armed men halted buses and cars, robbed their passengers and set the vehicles ablaze. It was a terrifying continuation of a wave of violence that has rattled rich and poor alike.

40 About 180 dispensaries applied in June to remain open, but only about 40 met all the criteria.

L.A. mellow on pot

The Los Angeles city council has voted to ease restrictions on medical marijuana dispensaries, allowing up to 140 to remain open. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Williams may have killed abroad: Police

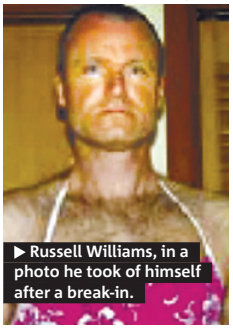
Cops confirm officer saw SUV in field, knocked on Jessica Lloyd's door before murder but she wasn't home Williams was hiding in backyard at the time

The criminal investigation of convicted sex killer Russell Williams is not over yet, as police sift through unsolved crimes in Canada and abroad to see if they're linked to the former colonel, the lead detective in the case said yesterday.

A team of detectives is still reviewing unsolved cases and working with police agencies in other countries to see if the former globetrotting military pilot, committed any other crimes.

"Our investigation never finished into Russell Williams," said Det.-Insp. Chris Nicholas of the Ontario Provincial Police.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/HANDOUT



Russell Williams, in a photo he took of himself after a break-in.

"He's obviously pleaded guilty to a number of offences, but we're still looking into his past and behaviour and other offences he may have committed."

Nicholas wouldn't comment on those investigations, but said police "from all over" have contacted them.

"Some of those are from outside of Canada, and we're working with them to assist them in determining if Russell Williams has anything to do with their crimes," he said.

Williams was convicted last month of first-degree murder in the brutal sex slayings of Cpl. Marie-France Comeau, 38, of Brighton, Ont., and Jessica Lloyd, 27, of Belleville, Ont. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Scandal in Spain over campaign video

Outrage and denunciations of "filth" for a video campaign in Spain showing a woman orgasmic over voting just mask naked political fear, the leader of the Young Socialists Party of Catalonia says.

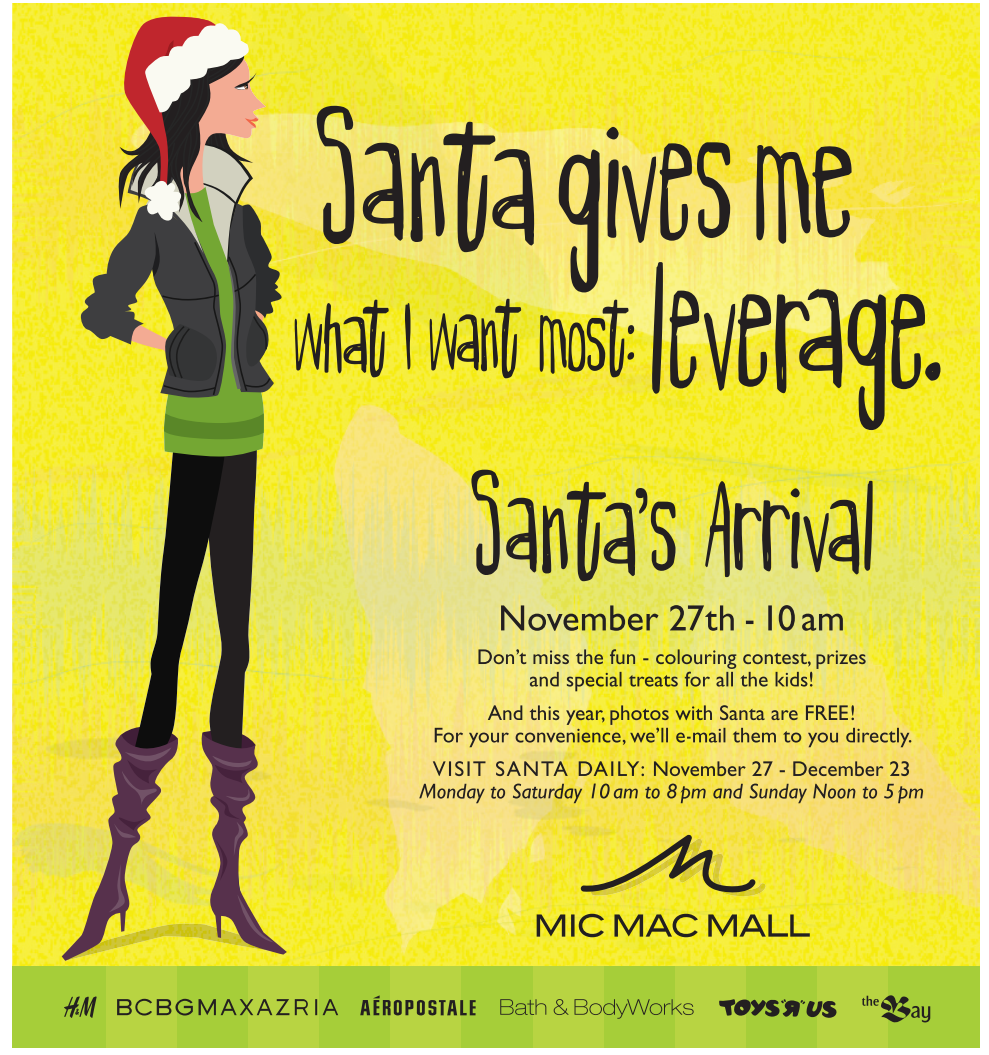
"They are not bothered by the content of its video, but rather its message," Javier Lopez said yesterday. A high voter turnout in regional Catalonia elections on Sunday would favour the Socialists over the conservative-liberal coalition CiU party, he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Reaction

The Green leader saw a funny side to the uproar.

Leader of the Green coalition in Catalonia, Joan Herrera, said it would be "very difficult to reach orgasm voting for any of the candidates, myself included."





XM and Sirius to join forces in powerful duet

Combined satellite radio company will have a total subscriber base of more than 1.7 million

THE CANADIAN PRESS


▶ John Bitove

Satellite radio companies XM Canada and Sirius Canada Inc. plan to merge in an effort to strengthen their competitive stance amid an industry crowded with audio entertainment options ranging from iPods to over-the-air radio stations.

The all-stock deal announced yesterday is valued at about $520 million and includes $130 million in long-term debt.

The move comes after longtime speculation that the two companies, which charge subscription fees for their services, would eventually combine their operations to save costs and put more satellite radio listeners under the same umbrella.

Their American counterparts, XM Radio and Sirius Satellite Radio, merged more than two years ago but the Canadian companies had been coy about whether they would follow suit.

Sirius Canada, a private company that is 40 per cent owned by CBC Radio, 40 per cent by Slaight Communications and 20 per cent by Sirius XM in the United States, will end up with 58 per cent ownership of Canadian Satellite Radio Holdings Inc., the parent company of XM Canada.

"This all stock merger of equals now creates a leading Canadian media company," said CSR chairman John Bitove, who will serve as the company's chairman. THE CANADIAN PRESS

U.S. Black Friday



▶ Shoppers walk with bags from JC Penney and Victoria's Secret in New York.

MARK LENNIHA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Calm before the storm

As retailers prepare for the crowds of Black Friday shoppers with sharply reduced prices on everything from TVs to toys, they're also hoping for something else they couldn't count on last year: consumers springing for that deluxe high-end flat-panel TV or that big playset.

Maple Leaf shares plunge

Shares of Maple Leaf Foods tumbled 10 per cent yesterday in the wake of the Ontario Teachers Pension Plan Board's decision to sell its entire 25 per cent stake in the Canadian food processor and bakery at a discount.

The company's stock closed down $1.28 at $11.41 at the Toronto Stock Exchange, off a sharper decline of as much as $1.55 earlier in the session.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market moment

PRICES AS OF 5 P.M. YESTERDAY

DOLLAR
+ 1.16¢
(98.90¢ US)

Natural gas 1,000 cu ft
$4.220
(– 4.4¢)

Gold contracts
$1,373.00
(– $4.60)

OIL
– $2.61 US
($83.86 US)

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U.S. jobless claims fall to two-year low

Hopeful sign that improvement in job market is accelerating • Economy grew at 2.5 per cent pace

The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell sharply last week to the lowest level since July 2008.

The Labour Department said yesterday that weekly unemployment claims dropped by 34,000 to a seasonally adjusted 407,000 in the week ending Nov. 20. Wall Street analysts expected a much smaller drop.

A Labour Department analyst said weekly claims are volatile during the week between the Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving holidays. A key question is whether claims will remain this low in future weeks, or bounce back.

Still, applications for jobless aid are steadily moving lower. Claims have fallen in four of the past six weeks.

The four-week average, a less volatile measure, dropped for the third straight week to 436,000, the lowest since August 2008. That's a month before the financial crisis intensified with the collapse of Lehman Brothers, worsening the recession.

The improvement can't come fast enough for frustrated job seekers. Applications for jobless aid need to stay below 425,000 for several weeks to signal that hiring is accelerating, economists say.

For the first 10 months of this year, claims mostly fluctuated around 450,000 until they began dropping in late October.

They fell steadily last year from a peak of 651,000 in March 2009.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Slow gains

Strong job gains have been slow to materialize, even as the economy grows at a modest pace.

- Private employers added 159,000 jobs in October, the most in six months.
- Still, the unemployment rate was stuck at 9.6 per cent for the third month.

Bombardier. CSeries aircraft



▶ The Bombardier CS300 is shown in this artist's rendering.

BOMBARDIER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Veteran hired to boost sales

Bombardier has hired a veteran of the commercial aerospace industry to help kick-start sales of its new CSeries aircraft. Charles (Chet) Fuller will become senior vice-president of sales, marketing and asset management next month. The Montreal-based aerospace manufacturer disappointed some industry observers when it failed to announce any CSeries sales at a recent air show in China.

BP makes discovery in Egypt

BP PLC says it has made a significant gas discovery in Egypt's west Nile Delta.

The London-based company said that further appraisal of the Hodoa discovery, located some 80 kilometres west of Alexandria, is underway.

BP operates and owns 80 per cent of the West Mediterranean deepwater concession with RWE Dea holding the remaining 20 per cent.

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* Not all rebates available at all stores: Instant rebates on appliances available at The Home Depot, Home Hardware, Sears and select independent retailers. Instant rebates on Lighting and Controls NOT available at Sears. Atlantic Superstore features instant rebates on CFL bulbs ONLY.

For more details visit www.nspower.ca/powerdowndiscount

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IN THIS CORNER, FIGHTING FOR THE LEFT ...

He says ...

JOHN MAZEROLLE



Have you ever had a moment of realization so striking it was like you were punched in the face? I had one of those moments recently, when I was punched in the face.

I realized the next day, as I nursed a fat lip, that I am definitely a liberal. (The fact that getting sucker-punched at a bar led me to thoughts on personal politics also proves that I'm a dork, but that's a different column.)

But let's discuss the incident, my first opportunity ever to tell a story that begins, "So, a guy walks into a bar ..."

That guy was me. I went into one of those bars that calls itself Irish because it sells cans of Guinness, and an attractive woman asked me to buy her a drink, even giving me some coins to help. I trust you can see where this is going.

There have been times in my love life that I have deserved not just a punch, but to be grabbed by the big toe and slammed into the ground repeatedly, like Bamm-Bamm Rubble used to do. This was not one of those times.

"There have been times in my love life that I have deserved not just a punch, but to be grabbed by the big toe and slammed into the ground repeatedly, like Bamm-Bamm Rubble used to do. This was not one of those times."

Yet, when the boyfriend showed up, he: 1. sucker-punched me; 2. after I had shaken his hand; and 3. took another swing at me while I was down before; 4. leaving the bar, giving him a coveted Grand Slam in the World Series of Douche-baggery. Kudos to him.

Then I screamed that I have a blood disorder and could die from a blow to the head.

You know how in the movies if a person sees a missile coming toward them they steel themselves and face their mortality with silent determination? If it was me, it would sound like this: "OH MY GOD THIS IS IT I NEVER ATE THAT PIE IN THE FRIDGE OOH NICE CRAFTSMANSHIP ON THE WARHEAD AAH LAST WORD!!!"

And here's where I earn my liberal credentials: I've heard it said that a liberal is a conservative who hasn't been mugged yet. Well, this was essentially a mugging, he made me wonder if I might die, and I'm still not angry at the guy. Instead, I'm hopeful that he was in a bad place and regrets what he did.

Unfortunately for him I'm also liberal in relying on the government, so I'll see him in court. Just call it my wicked left.

Read more of John Mazerolle's columns at metronews.ca/hesays

Cartoon

MICHAEL DE ADDER



Bad sex is rewarded

Worth mentioning

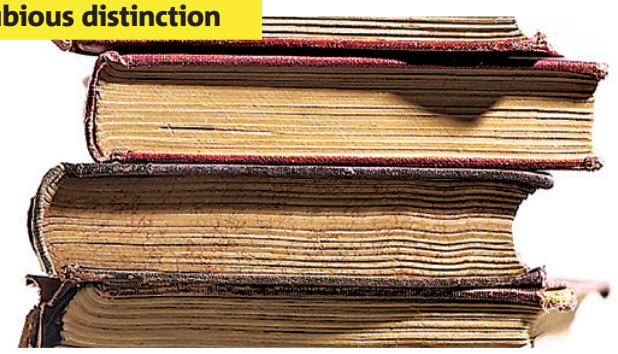
Canadian author Annabel Lyon's lauded novel The Golden Mean has earned a spot on Britain's Bad Sex In Fiction Award short list.

London's Literary Review nominated the book and seven others for the 18th annual award.

Lyon, who lives in New Westminster, B.C., won last year's Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize for The Golden Mean, which follows Greek philosopher Aristotle as he tutors a young Alexander the Great.

The novel was also shortlisted for last year's Scotiabank Giller Prize and the Governor General's Literary Award.

Dubious distinction



Other books on this year's Bad Sex short list include Freedom by Jonathan Franzen, The Slap by Christos Tsiolkas, and Maya by Alastair Campbell.

The list is rounded out by A Life Apart by Neel Mukherjee, Heartbreak by Craig Raine, The Shape Of Her by Rowan Somerville, and Mr. Peanut by Adam Ross.

The award will be presented Monday in St. James's Square in Westminster.

Last year's winner was Jonathan Littell's The Kindly Ones for a passage that compares a sexual encounter to a battle with a one-eyed mythological monster.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Is airport security too strict?

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Metro Minute at Victorian Christmas

Warm up your hands and your singing voice at Halifax's inaugural Victorian Christmas.

Drinking hot apple cider and carolling are just two holiday activities taking place at this event at the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site Saturday and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.

Kids can make their own holiday decorations and may even be visited by Father Christmas. Sing along with a local choir, or get a jump-start on your Christmas shopping at the Regimental gift shop.

Admission to Victorian Christmas is a non-perishable food item or a cash donation to FEED Nova Scotia.

METRO

METRO FILE



▶ A Victorian Christmas will be held at the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site Saturday and Sunday.

Deck the halls with sounds of Christmas

Holiday tunes from Mariah Carey, Susan Boyle, Annie Lennox, Indigo Girls, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr. and Shelby Lynne

Mariah Carey insists that Christmas is her favourite time of year, and it shows on Merry Christmas II You, Carey's second holiday album.

The record is a mix of classics such as O Little Town of Bethlehem and O Holy Night.

It also includes new recordings, including the first single, Oh Santa!

Here are some other Christmas albums to warm you up this season.

Annie Lennox, A Christmas Cornucopia (Decca)
Annie Lennox proves herself a pro at mixing old- and new-world sounds on her first holiday album, A Christmas Cornucopia, which features a combination of English and French classics, along with one original of her own.

The album opens with Angles From the Realms of Glory, to which Lennox adds a Middle Eastern sound, and Lullay Lullay (Coventry Carol), features some great new vocal twists to make it a dark, emotional whirlwind.

Various artists, World Christmas Party (Putumayo)
The best thing about this holiday CD — apart from the opening reggae track that wishes listeners an irie Christmas — is that it breathes new life into classic Christmas songs.

Poncho Sanchez gives a groovy, Latin twist to Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas.

Now That's What I Call Christmas 4 (EMI)
You get what one would expect on the fourth installment of a Now That's What I Call Music holiday recording: A pop-centric variety of Christmas music performed by today's hottest acts.

This version comes with two discs. The first set is iTunes-friendly with artists like Lady Gaga singing Christmas Tree to Rihanna's rendition of A Child Is Born.

Indigo Girls, Holly Happy Days (Vanguard Records)
This album has in abundance what made Amy Ray and Emily Saliers who they are: beautiful harmonizing and incredible instrumentation. Holly Days is chockfull of fiddles, mandolins, banjos and, of course, acoustic guitar.

Shelby Lynne, Merry Christmas (Everso Records)
No matter if you've been in the business for several decades or are still staking out ground, an album full of holiday songs — originals and, of course, covers — is one sure way to eke out more sales and get some coveted air time amid the commercials and jingles.

Shelby Lynne is a late-comer to the holiday party, but the 11-song platter was worth the wait.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP PHOTO



▶Mariah Carey and Snoopy celebrate the recording of Charlie Brown Christmas featuring Peanuts music, on Carey's new album, Merry Christmas II You, in New York.

Also released



Other Christmas albums to choose from.

- **Susan Boyle, The Gift (Columbia)**
On the second album from the Britain's Got Talent sensation, Susan Boyle offers up a selection of holiday classics, plus a few others, including Leonard Cohen's now-ubiquitous Hallelujah.

- **Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Jr., Christmas With The Rat Pack (Capitol/EMI)**
Why settle for an X-mas album from a modern-day retro crooner when you can spend a cool Yule with the Rat Pack in their prime on this collection chosen from '50s and '60s holiday recordings.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2 scene

Buffy's back



Vampires, beware: Buffy is coming back. A remake of the horror comedy Buffy the Vampire Slayer is in the works at Warner Bros., the studio said Tuesday. A studio spokeswoman says the project is in the earliest stages of development. It hasn't even been green-lit yet, and there's no director or star attached. One thing we do know: Joss Whedon, who wrote the first Buffy script and created the TV series starring Sarah Michelle Gellar that became a pop-culture phenomenon, is not involved.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A special group of friends helps Kenny Wayne Shepherd put out first live concert album





Travolta & Preston welcome a new baby boy to family

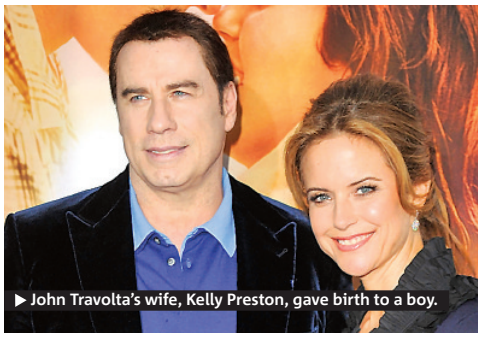
John Travolta and Kelly Preston welcomed their new son this week, according to E! News.

Baby Benjamin was born late Tuesday night at a Florida hospital, weighing eight pounds and three ounces.

"John, Kelly and their daughter, Ella Bleu, are very happy about the newest member of the family," the actor's rep said.

"Both mother and baby are healthy and doing beautifully."

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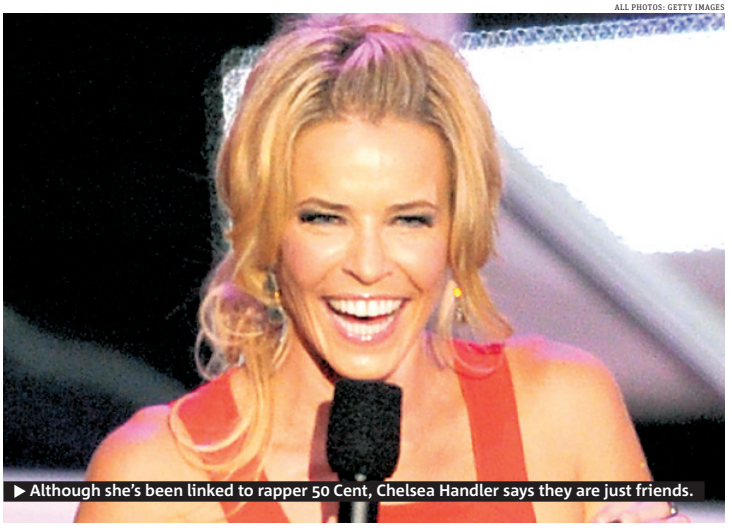
▶ John Travolta's wife, Kelly Preston, gave birth to a boy.

Miley Cyrus, please act your age!

Miley Cyrus was spotted after a night out looking worse for wear and "chain-smoking up a storm," a source tells E! News.

METRO

ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



▶ Although she's been linked to rapper 50 Cent, Chelsea Handler says they are just friends.

Just friends with 50 Cent but in love with Bieber?

Handler denies rumours of dating the rapper

Despite persistent rumours that Chelsea Handler is dating rapper 50 Cent, the late-night talk show host insists the pair are just friends.

She also reveals she has a cute nickname for the burly recording artist.

"I call him 'girl,'" says the comical Chelsea Lately host. "I go, 'Hey, what's up, girl?' He likes it. He thinks I'm crazy. We have a cute relationship."

Gossip blogs have been buzzing lately after Handler, who brings her Chelsea Chelsea Bang Bang standup tour to Toronto on Dec. 11, and 50 Cent were spotted hanging out together a few times.

Handler says they were just collaborating on a video that's gone viral on YouTube. In the clip, 50 Cent walks into the bedroom of teenage YouTube sensation Keenan Cahill and starts rapping with him to his new tune, Down on Me.

"We're friends," said Handler of 50 Cent. "There's nothing else going on there."

It's a different story, however, for Handler and Canadian pop sensation Justin Bieber, whom she met when she hosted the MTV Video Music Awards in August.

"I love Bieber and he loves me," she said. "He's got a big, mad crush on me."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Celebrity tweets



Ashton Kutcher [@aplusk] Could it be that it's not about having the answers but rather asking the right questions?



Kirstie Alley [@kirstiealley] I'm sitting here waiting for Fran Dreschers guest on her new talk show....they are 40 minutes late...I am going to the mall. Goodbye Fran



Conan O'Brien [@Conan OBrien] I'm telling ya, the clock is ticking on this Harry Potter fad

Talking points

Not pregnant

With her recent engagement and photos of her wearing bulky clothing, Jessica Simpson is dodging pregnancy rumors.

It doesn't help she admitted to being sick before appearing on CBS's The Early Show.

But sources close to Simpson deny the pregnancy rumors, according to Hollyscoop. "She's not pregnant. She was just sick."

Jessica has said she looks forward to having children.

METRO



No turkey for Brangelina

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt won't be celebrating Thanksgiving this year, at least if Jolie has anything to say about it.

"Angelina Jolie hates this holiday and wants no part in rewriting history like so many other Americans," a source tells Popeater.

"She definitely doesn't want to teach her multicultural family how to celebrate a story of murder."

According to the source, even though Brad recently said they'd whip up a turkey to celebrate, "he will have to cook it himself."

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Don't get all knotted up about your scarf

Easy knots can kick-up your outfit A scarf can be runway or a head-to-toe basic – whatever you want Don't get twisted, have fun

A scarf can be a wardrobe's workhorse. It adds colour, style and, especially as the weather turns wintry, warmth. Now, if you only knew how to tie the thing.

Don't go for a complicated knot, says Talbots' fashion director Tammy Vipperman. Flair largely comes from confidence, so any hesitation about tying the scarf will show, she adds. "If you can fold laundry and tie a basic knot, you can wear a scarf," she says. She offered up other tips.

SILK SQUARE
Lay the scarf flat on a table, take two opposite end corners and fold them into the centre, giving you two straight edges. Keep folding those outer straight edges into the centre until you have, essentially, a scarf sash.

Wrap it around your neck, setting up the knot slightly toward one side. Pull the two ends into an X to tie. The key to the flattest, most flattering knot will be to cross the ends so the outside piece is on the bottom, closest to the body, and then pulling that over the top and then down through the knot so it will stay in place and not flap around, Vipperman says.

"Most people think this is the most intimidating scarf," she says. "But you can wear it with a cardigan, denim, a little heel — with a necklace."

THE NOODLE
You get an Elizabethan-collar effect if you keep looping it around to the bustline level, tying it loosely at the back of the neck. Go a little tighter and you have a turtleneck.

THE WRAP
This is the scarf you want with you all the time. But don't wear it too perfectly. That gives it "flourish," she explains.

CASHMERE
The classic winter scarf with fringe at the edges is nice because it's practically flat when worn under a coat, Vipperman says. She prefers the "gentleman's fold," which really isn't a fold: The scarf goes around the neck and the sides are flat against the body and positioned like lapels of a jacket.

THE BOHO
This scarf is longer, thinner and usually with fringe on the end. Because of its length, it's really the only shape you can successfully toss oh-so-casually over the shoulders.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"You can wear it with a cardigan, denim, a little heel — with a necklace."
TAMMY VIPPERMAN, ON SILK SQUARE SCARFS

TALBOTS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

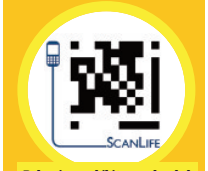


▶ A scarf adds colour, style, and – most importantly as the weather turns increasingly freightful – warmth.

Holiday gifts



Looking for that perfect holiday gift? 2 for Couples has released the 101 Amazing Gifts iPad app on the App Store. The must-have gift guide is a one-stop shop for everyone on your list, and showcases everything from style and home to gadgets and kid stuff. It's updated regularly to ensure fresh gift ideas are always at your fingertips.
METRO



Balenciaga exhibit, spearheaded by de la Renta, gives glimpse of fashion royalty

Cueing up those tough curls

THE KIT

Just in time for party season, perfectly tousled, curly hairstyles are about to turn heads in a big way.

"Most women have some natural curl to their hair," says Chantel Simmons, Hair Kit Editor for THE KIT magazine. "And since it's all about imperfect waves, you don't have to worry about fighting frizz!"

Whether your locks are wound tight or poker-straight, you can easily make this trend work for you.

SLEEP ON IT
"If you have naturally wavy hair, simply wash your hair before bed, then apply a styling product and let it dry overnight," says Simmons, who suggests wavy gals try Moroccanoil's Original Oil Treatment ($41, moroccanoil.com).

"You'll wake up with perfectly imperfect waves."

CURL IT UP — OR DOWN
"If you have straight hair, try using both large- and skinny-barreled curling irons to get a mix of curl sizes," says Simmons.

"If your hair is super curly, press a flat iron over some of the coils to straighten them out a bit," she says.

The perfect tool? The Rowenta Straight & Curl 2-in-1 ($180, rowentabeauty.ca), a curling iron and hair straightener in one.

BREAK OUT THE SPRAY
"I've rediscovered hairspray this season," says Simmons, who swears by L'Oréal Elnett Satin Extra Strong Hold hairspray ($15, loreal.ca).

"It holds styles without leaving them feeling crunchy, and brushes out with no residue."

THE KIT is Canada's beauty authority and first-ever digital beauty magazine. Subscribe for free at thekit.ca.

Put sparkle on your tree

For the trend follower: Purple, blue and teal are great options for lights For ornaments, glitter (always in), mercury glass, and mixed-and-matched gold and silver Try running garland vertically and keep tinsel off

DECOR MOMENT



KARL LOHNES
HOME@METRONEWS.CA

Want to have a designer-looking holiday tree that is guaranteed to impress this year? Short of stealing one of the spectacular trees from The Bay's windows, here's a few designer tricks to get a lush, full and glamourous tree to show off.

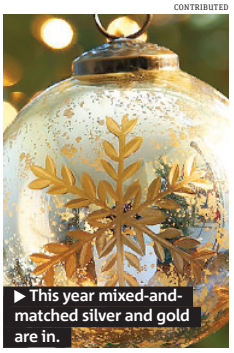
Filler up:
Whether faux or real, the tree needs to look full. Fill in empty holes and spaces between branches with multi green tones of voile, wired ribbon bows or large plastic outdoor balls.
Last year's faux garlands will work magic between the branches near the bottoms to create a lush look. Remember to put the fillers deep enough into the tree so they are unseen and there will be plenty of space for the ornaments up front.

Light and bright:
Trees should have 100 lights per each foot of height. I like to add 20 to 50 per cent more for a full and glamorous look.

Consider uplighting your tree with a canned light that sits on the floor. A soft golden bulb will add a fantasy glow to the tree and create beautiful shadows from the branches.

Supermodel heights:
The tree's top should be within 12 inches of the ceiling; a tree any shorter will look stunted.

CONTRIBUTED



▶ This year mixed-and-matched silver and gold are in.

If you have high ceilings, the tree should reach two-thirds the height of the room. If you have a tree that is not tall enough, stand it on a sturdy box or table; skirt the table with a faux-fur throw or brightly coloured piece of silk.

CONTRIBUTED



▶ The science of ornaments: 50 per foot and large ones belong on the bottom.

Ornamental heaven:
A designer tree should follow good rules of design, with smaller ornaments on top and larger ones on the bottom.

Just how many ornaments are needed? Consider 50 per foot (thats going all around the tree).

Popular looks for ornaments this year are glitter, mercury glass, and lots of gold and silver. Mixed-and-matched gold and silver will shine as one of the biggest tree trends this year.

Trims:
If it'll kill a cat it is not good for the tree, so keep the tinsel strands off.

Garland is great; consider displaying it vertically (rather than around the tree) for a modern look. Strings of popcorn with a light spray of silver or gold paint is an easy, fun and crafty way to add sheen to the tree.







Chinese restaurant faces a few grand challenges in new location

Wang's restaurant has moved to Brenton Place near a construction project ◗ The decor and servers are loveable ◗ But they face challenges attracting patrons

LUNCH RUSH

VALERIE MANSOUR
FOOD@METRONEWS.CA

With a huge condo construction project nearby, Wang's Restaurant is brave moving into this Brenton Place location, already abandoned by The Cellar and Curry Village.

The basement space is comfy with lovely decor, but Friday lunchtime shouldn't be this quiet.

We try two lunch specials that come with rice and a drink, which for us means Chinese tea.

For an extra dollar we each have an excellent spring roll full of fresh, crisp vegetables.

Crispy Shredded Chili Beef Combo with steamed rice certainly looks delicious but the meat is seriously overcooked.

The Spicy Chicken Combo suffers the same ailment — the chicken is dry and overdone.

What a shame as the dishes are beautifully presented, nicely spiced, and awash with little chili peppers. And the Egg Fried Rice is tasty.

The servers are likeable and efficient, but Wang's faces a grand challenge to attract more patrons to the neighbourhood.

- **Wang's Grand Chinese Restaurant**
- 5677 Brenton Place
- 429-9264
- wangrestaurant.ca
- Hours: Mon to Fri 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., Sat to Sun 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Rating: **
- Price range: $$$
- Reservations: Yes
- Client negotiations: Yes
- Lunch with co-workers: Yes
- Social lunch: Yes
- Quick solo lunch: Yes
- Licensed: Yes
- Time in: 1 p.m.
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▶ Crispy Shredded Chili Beef Combo

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Mediterranean Chicken



Ingredients:

- 15 ml (1 tbsp) olive oil
- 4 Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into chunks
- 4 carrots, thickly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) all-purpose flour
- 500 ml (2 cups) sodium-reduced chicken broth
- 1 cooked whole rotisserie chicken
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) pesto
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) lemon juice
- 10 kalamata olives
- 1 sweet red pepper, seeded and thinly sliced

Preparation:

1. In large pot, heat oil. Stir in potatoes, carrots, garlic and onion; cook, stirring for about 5 minutes.
2. Whisk flour into chicken broth; gradually stir into pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 8 to 10 minutes or until potatoes are just tender.
3. Remove skin from chicken and cut into pieces; add to pot. Stir in pesto, lemon juice, olives and red pepper; simmer for 5 to 10 minutes. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Opa! Chef bottles tasty new olive oil

Professional Toronto chef Christine Cushing is bringing her own variety of the Greek staple to Canada

THE CANADIAN PRESS



▶ Chef Christine Cushing has created her own olive oil.

In Greece, where Christine Cushing was born, residents consume almost 25 litres of olive oil per capita annually.

In fact, people use twice that of any other Mediterranean country.

Cushing, a professional chef from Toronto who became well known for her cooking shows on Food Network Canada, is bringing her own variety of Greek olive oil to Canada.

An ardent fan of using olive oils in her cooking as an essential ingredient, she now has two varieties in Canadian stores.

The original, labelled Bold, is produced in Crete. It has a peppery finish and is the perfect dressing oil for arugula, Belgian endive and flavour-forward vegetables, she says.

"And although my mother is from Crete, I had never been there," she says. "I was blown away by the smells of dried oregano and wild thyme that permeates everywhere."

Cushing's most recent oil import, an organic oil named Vibrant, is from the coastal Peloponnese region of Mani on the mainland.

"It is medium-bodied, forwardly fruity, round with grassy and floral notes," she explains.

It's perfect as a dressing for subtle lettuces and vegetables, drizzled over pasta, used in homemade mayonnaise, in dessert preparations including cookies and as a finishing oil for mild white fish.

Although both products are made from Koroneiki olives, they are distinctly different as they express the flavours of their respective terroirs.

They are being produced by a friend in Greece who is an olive oil maker.

"He and his family make super high-end oils and helped me source them," she says.

Cushing says that there is a lot of misinformation about extra-virgin olive oil in North America.

"Unlike Europe, there is no regulation to govern the quality of olive oil. There, in order to call something extra-virgin, it can have no more than one per cent acidity."

Cushing is concerned that Canadian consumers are perplexed "because they don't know what a great oil should taste like and what it should cost."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ingredients:

- 500 g (1 lb) boneless beef sirloin
- 5 ml (1 tsp) cumin
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) cinnamon
- Salt and pepper
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) butter
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 500 ml (2 cups) diced sweet potato
- 175 ml (3/4 cup) broth
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) all-purpose flour
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) milk
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) tomato paste
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) sliced almonds, toasted (optional)


▶ Tender Beef Sauté

Tender Beef Sauté Preparation:

1. Trim fat from beef and cut across grain into thin strips. In a bowl, sprinkle beef with cumin, cinnamon, salt and pepper.
2. In skillet, melt half of butter over medium-high heat. Brown beef strips in three batches, adding more butter as necessary; transfer to clean bowl.
3. Reduce heat to medium. Melt remaining butter in skillet; add onion and sweet potato and saute 3 minutes.
4. Add broth, increase heat to medium-high and bring to a boil, scraping up browned bits. Whisk flour into milk and gradually stir into skillet; bring to a boil, stirring. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring often, for 5 minutes or until sweet potatoes are tender.
5. Stir in green pepper. Simmer 3 minutes or until green pepper is tender-crisp and sauce has thickened. Stir in beef with juices and tomato paste; simmer for 2 minutes.
6. Season to taste. Sprinkled with almonds, if desired. Makes 4 servings. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Holiday decorating hits and misses

A list of Do's and Don'ts, from trimming your tree to following decor trends


ISTOCK

▶ Step back from your tree as you decorate to prevent clutter and overcrowding.

It's easy to go overboard when decorating for the holidays, but with a few Do's and Don'ts your holiday decor can be the hit of the season. So before you unpack the ornaments, string the lights and trim the tree, take note of these holiday decorating tips, courtesy of HGTV's 30 Holiday Decorating Hits and Misses.

Do

Spend money on what people will see (a wreath for the door), not on something that will get lost in a sea of ornaments or in a large display.

Don't

Over decorate the tree. You want to ensure that the branches are visible and the shape of the tree is evident. The best way to avoid overcrowding the tree is to put on three to four ornaments and take a step back.

Do

Set the mood with candles. They soften the most modern and contemporary spaces and set a great atmosphere.

Don't

Leave decor dead spots. Don't just decorate the room the tree is in. Consider incorporating holiday decor throughout the house.

Do

Go bold with colours. Don't be afraid to use colours other than red and green. If neutral tones are more your taste, have a white Christmas and use all white and silver to decorate.

Don't

Leave the dining table naked. You don't want to neglect the place that everyone sits around. A festive dining table sets a great tone for a holiday dinner.

Do

Repurpose existing decor. Look at what you have and re-invent it. Use this as an opportunity to be creative.

Don't

Be too trendy. You want to make sure that your decorations are an investment and not something you dispose of at the end of the holiday season.

Do

Get tied up in ribbon. The great thing about ribbon is that it's inexpensive and delivers a big impact.

Don't

Make your home look like a museum. Perfection can make your home unwelcoming and the holidays are a time to feel cosy and warm.

HGTV's 30 Holiday Decorating Hits and Misses airs Saturday. Check your local listings for times.

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Microsoft Arc Touch Mouse
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This mouse lies flat when not in use, but with one satisfying click, can be bent into a curved shape, making it look more like a standard mouse. Light and low-maintenance, it turns off automatically whenever you press the mouse into a flat shape. Available at Best Buy and Future Shop.





Apple iPad
$629-$829

Although ads for the iPad often depict someone relaxing with the tablet, it is an ideal companion for people on the go as well. True, you can surf the web and watch movies on a phone or laptop, but the iPad's 9.7-inch display makes for easier viewing. Available at Apple stores.

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Get your game on

A brief look at the onslaught of holiday video games

KEITH CARMEN
HALIFAX@METRONEWS.CA

Flashing lights, opened boxes, dazzled young eyes bouncing with excitement, flailing hands and cherubic glee. All of these are signs of one annual event that establishes our financial/familial obligations, time-wasting duties and indoor activities: Video game season, a time known to the collective masses beyond post-secondary school as Christmas.

While such a tongue-in-cheek jab at the commercial aspects of a major holiday seem cheap, consider that as every gaming creator, retailer and advertiser gears up for what is their busiest season, there's nothing inexpensive about Yuletide.

Nor is there much lacking as upcoming holiday game releases spanning everything from sports, fantasy and first-person action to mind puzzles for every kid from two to 92 asserts. At that, here are a few potential options to flesh-out a stocking, update a collection or offset a new console such as Sony's PlayStation 3 (PS3), Microsoft's Xbox 360 or Nintendo's Wii.

With a heavy push on 3D gaming this year, many companies are lauding their latest dimension-warping offerings such as sports hero **Shaun White's Skateboarding** (Ubisoft, all platforms) which allows gamers the opportunity to incite creativity amongst avatars, thus saving the world from a Big Brother-inspired corporation bent on eliminating individualism.







Those looking to keep their finger-tapping honed might opt to request EA Games' latest instalment of the **NHL** series. Hitting number 11, the franchise (PS3/Xbox 360) is still hot, not unlike Sony's own **Gran Turismo 5** (PS3) which offers a parade of cars waiting to be put through the ringer by armchair race enthusiasts. On the more gruesome end of the spectrum, first-person shooting game **Time Crisis: Razing Storm** is one game to feature PlayStation's new Move, a motion-sensing game controller similar to Wii's module.





If something a touch less aggressive is imperative, **Disney's Guilty Party** (Wii) is an endlessly engaging single/multi-player investigative crime solver, film tie-in **Tron: Evolution** (Disney, all platforms) drops just in time for the movie's theatrical release and in keeping with their own stellar legacies, the onslaught of musician wannabe games offer new batches of interactive fun via **DJ Hero 2, Guitar Hero: Warriors Of Rock** (Activision, all platforms) and its rival **Rock Band 3** (Harmonix).





Keeping it personal

Not all systems are monolithic slabs taking up space in the entertainment unit. Represented just as readily this holiday season, handheld systems have some new treats for the solitary gamer.

Nintendo DS: This year's craze? Nostalgia. Both Intellivision and Atari license their greatest hits on one cartridge each, Mario vs. Donkey Kong Mini-Land Mayhem features our favourite gorilla-jumping plumber and Michael Jackson: The Experience has you-know-who teaching dance moves.

PlayStation Personal (PSP): EyePet lets us raise a digital monkey in photos of our real world, confront deities as warrior Kratos in God Of War and grapple without skinned knees on WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2011.



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2 DELL $149

The Dell Streak has a five-inch screen that enables full-size web page browsing, but is small enough to fit in your pocket. Price with 3-year voice and data plan. **Available at Rogers retail stores**



3 MICROSOFT $69.95

With beautiful curves and a compact design, the Arc Keyboard features a battery life indicator, lightweight and compact design and stowable nano transceiver. **Available at Future Shop, Best Buy, Staples**







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Mastercraft Auto Hammer, 12V , $149.99, features include a 3,600 IPM, single speed that allows you to drive nails up to 3 1/2" long flush with wooden work pieces; compact, ergonomic design allows you to drive nails in hard-to-reach places; magnetic sleeve and clamp (12 mm); built-in LED worklight and rubber-coated grip handle. Available at Canadian Tire.





The new **Stanley FatMax 142 Mechanic Tool set, $199,** includes: 33 1/4" accessories - 20 regular sockets, 10 deep sockets, 1 extension, 1 ratcheting spinner handle and 1 pear-head ratchet and 35 3/8" accessories - 20 regular sockets, 10 deep sockets, 2 spark plug sockets, 1 extension bar, 1 universal joint and 1 pear-head ratchet. Available at Canadian Tire.



Porter Cable Power Tool Combo Kit, $400, Great for the DIY'er at home, features 18 Volt Lithium Ion Drill, 18 Volt Circulaw Saw, 18 Volt Reciprocal Saw, 18 Volt Flashlight. Lithium Batteries, Storage Bag and Blades all included. Available at all home improvement stores across Canada.

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fruits-passion.com



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5

Consonant Body Care set, $49
Designed to kick-start a natural-care routine, this set from organic skincare line Consonant Body includes face wash, body wash and body lotion.
consonantbody.com



6

Lancome Men Genific HD Youth Activating Concentrate, $60
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4 sports

High praise for Moose's Ryan

‘He reminds me of myself a little bit,’ says Herd owner/coach

Bobby Smith sees a little of himself in Halifax Mooseheads rookie Andrew Ryan.

High praise considering the Mooseheads owner/head coach was one of the NHL's elite players through the 1980s with the Minnesota North Stars and Montreal Canadiens.

Smith views the lanky left-winger from Paradise, N.L., as someone he can mentor.

"I envision (Ryan) becoming a centreman like I was and being a high-end guy," Smith said of the 16-year-old Mooseheads rookie.

"He reminds me of myself a little bit ... I think I'm uniquely situated to help Andrew really advance his career in the next couple of years."

Smith set the Ontario Hockey League's all-time record for points in a season with an astounding 192 as an Ottawa 67 and then became the first overall pick in the 1978 NHL draft.

When told of the comparison after a recent Mooseheads game, Ryan struggled for a response.

"That's a compliment. I don't know how to take that," stammered Ryan, who was drafted 19th overall last June. "That's a great compliment coming from a guy who played so many years in the NHL.

"I've just got to try my best to follow in his footsteps."

According to Smith, Ryan is on the right path. The six-foot-two, 186-pounder has four goals in 19 games and will represent Atlantic Canada at the world under-17 challenge in December.

"He's a terrific player," Smith said. "He's exceeded our expectations. He's probably a better player at 16 than we thought he'd be."

Smith said despite his tender age, Ryan has the ability to be an impact player at the major junior level immediately.

"I know he's 16, but there's no reason why he can't be a very good player in this league, this year. And he's going to be a scary (good) player in the next couple of years."

ST. JOHN'S TELEGRAM

RYAN TAPLIN/METRO



▶ Andrew Ryan has earned high praise from his head coach Bobby Smith.

Ready to return

- Forward Gabriel Desjardins is ready to return to the Halifax Mooseheads' lineup for the first time since Oct. 22.
- Desjardins, who has three goals in 14 games, has missed 12 of the past 13 contests with an upper-body injury.
- Forward Gerrad Grant (ankle) hasn't skated this week.

METRO

Hockey news

Michael Kirkpatrick
The North Sydney native and former Dartmouth major midget star, now with the Saint John Sea Dogs, has been suspended for three games for checking from behind. He is 15th in QMJHL scoring with 30 points in 24 games.





Bryce Swan
The former Halifax Mooseheads forward, now with the St. Francis Xavier X-Men, is tied for eighth in Atlantic University Sport men's hockey scoring with eight goals and seven assists for 15 points in 12 games. It's Swan's third season at St. F.X.

Scan code for sports

A classic case of offence vs. defence for Dinos

Blake Nill knows his Calgary Dinos' offence is facing a stiff challenge.

Although the Dinos have scored 35 or more points in five straight games — including a 35-8 shellacking of the Saint Mary's Huskies in last Saturday's Mitchell Bowl — the Laval Rouge et Or have allowed a stingy 6.4 points per game.

The Dinos and Rouge et Or clash in Saturday's Vanier Cup in Quebec City at 12:45 p.m., live on TSN.

14 The number of interceptions the Laval Rouge et Or have grabbed in just three playoff games.

"Their defence is very, very good. They are very athletic," said Nill, a long-time head coach at Saint Mary's. "With them, it's not just one guy. You have to be aware of all of them at all times."

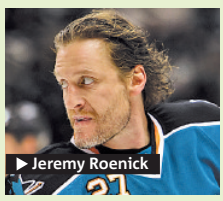
METRO

JACQUES BOISSINOT/THE CANADIAN PRESS



▶ Calgary Dinos head coach Blake Nill

Sports in brief



▶ Jeremy Roenick

Roenick heads to Halifax

EVENTS. Former NHL star Jeremy Roenick and Montreal Alouettes quarterback Anthony Calvillo will be part of the Canadian Progress Club's 39th annual sports celebrity dinner at the Cunard Centre in Halifax on Feb. 3.

Stock Tour gets new sponsor

AUTO RACING. The Maritime Pro Stock Tour has a new title sponsor after reaching a multi-year agreement with Parts For Trucks. It will now be known as the Parts For Trucks Pro Stock Tour after 10 years under Carquest sponsorship.

METRO

One year since it all went wrong

Tiger Woods tries to turn the corner after year of scandal and setbacks

By the numbers

0 Victories, the first time in 15 seasons on the PGA Tour that Woods has failed to win at least one tournament.

3 Sponsors lost (Accenture, Gatorade, AT&T) and top-10 finishes, the fewest in his career.

7 Consecutive tournaments Woods finished outside the top 10, the longest stretch of his career.

65 Best round of the season, shot in the first round of The Barclays and matched in the final round of the Australian Masters.

79 Worst round of the season, shot in the second round of the Quail Hollow Championship to miss the cut by eight shots.

281 Consecutive weeks Woods held the world No. 1 ranking before losing it to Lee Westwood on Oct. 31.

The dark sedan backed into a spot next to the clubhouse at the Australian Masters, trunk open, waiting to whisk Tiger Woods to the airport. Lingering behind the car was a friend who was still wrestling with divided loyalties — to Woods and his former wife.

They approached each other, awkwardly at first, then shared a quick embrace and quiet words.

Woods believes he is finally ready to move on after a self-destructive year that cost him his marriage, his mystique, millions in endorsements and, lastly, his No. 1 ranking.

What remains are relationships to repair, along with his golf game.

Still to come is U.S. Thanksgiving.

"I think it's going to be great," Woods said in an interview with The Associated Press. "I'm going to be with my family. My mom is going to be there. We're going to have a great Thanksgiving. We've turned the corner, turned the page, and it's time to move forward."

He was not playing dumb.

Woods realizes the public might forever connect him and U.S. Thanksgiving with perhaps one of the most shocking downfalls in sports.

It started with the National Enquirer story of an affair with a nightclub hostess. Then came the still mysterious, middle-of-the-night accident Nov. 27 when he drove his SUV over a fire hydrant and crashed into a tree beyond his driveway. His wife tended to him in the street, the back windows of the Cadillac Escalade bashed out with a golf club.

On the 911 call was the chilling voice of his mother as she cried out, "What happened?"

One year later, that remains a relevant question. No one really knew much about Woods except that he dominated golf like no one had before. Within weeks, everyone knew too much.

He was caught in a stunning web of infidelity, each discretion played out in public through voice mails, celebrity magazines, TV talk shows and even "sexting" on a porn star's website.

Woods had spent 14 years carefully cultivating an impeccable image that brought him worldwide fame. Just like that, he went from being universally revered to roundly ridiculed.

At a gala dinner in the Crowns Tower, the same hotel where the nightclub hostess was spotted a year earlier, Woods shared the stage with Shane Warne, known as the Tiger Woods of Australian cricket, on and off the pitch.

Warne built his legend as a wicked leg spinner — and a prolific womanizer.

"I think we've got a little bit in common," Warne said with a smile, pausing for effect. "I love golf, too."

Woods flashed an easy smile, breaking the brief tension in the room, and the audience quickly burst into laughter. It was the first time Woods has laughed publicly about such an embarrassing episode in his life, perhaps a sign that he had indeed turned the corner.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROBERT CIANFLONE/GETTY IMAGES



▶ Tiger Woods looks dejected after hitting a shot into the rough during the Australian Masters earlier this month.

Raptors keep on winning

106	90
RAPTORS	76ERS

Andrea Bargnani led all scorers with 24 points, Jose Calderon added 16 points and nine assists while newcomers Jerryd Bayless and Peja Stojakovic each contributed off the bench as the Toronto Raptors beat the Philadelphia 76ers 106-90 last night for their fourth straight victory.

Reggie Evans added 12 points and 22 rebounds, Bayless chipped in 13 points and Leandro Barbosa added 11 for the Raptors (6-9), who led from start to finish.

Andre Iguodola with 17 points, Jrue Holiday with 16 and Thaddeus Young with 14 led the 76ers (3-12), who were coming off a 116-114 overtime loss at Washington a night earlier and were missing suspended forward Elton Brand. They were outhustled throughout the night and couldn't match the aggressiveness of their hosts in losing for the seventh time in eight outings.

Bayless and Stojakovic made their Toronto debuts after being acquired Saturday from New Orleans for Jarrett Jack, David Andersen and Marcus Banks. They missed Sunday's stunning 102-101 victory over visiting Boston, practising for the first time with their new teammates Tuesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA ticket prices drop once again

NBA ticket prices have fallen for the second straight season.

The sports business outlet Team Marketing Report said yesterday the average price of a non-premium seat dropped 2.5 per cent to $48 US. That followed a 2.8 per cent decrease last season.

The Los Angeles Lakers have the highest average at $95 following a 2.1 per cent rise.

The NBA champions are followed by New York at $89, Boston at $69 and Chicago at $64.

Toronto sits seventh at $51 — a decrease of 2.6 per cent.

Memphis is last at $23 after a 3.9 per cent drop, and Washington is at $25 after a 9.9 per cent decrease.

Detroit dropped prices 10 per cent to $43. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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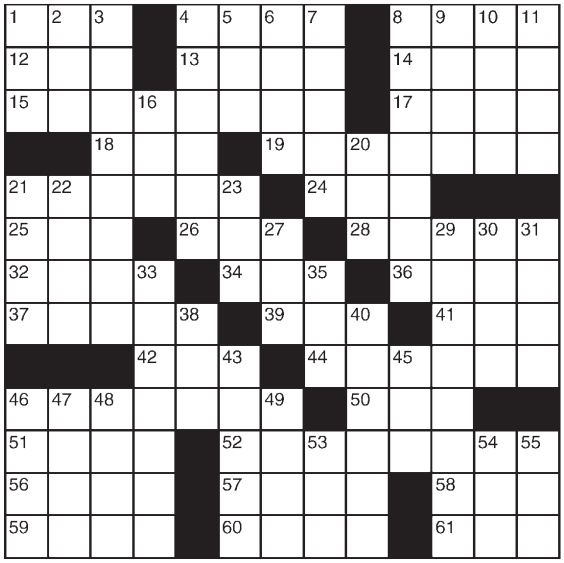
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Crossword



Across

1 Back talk
4 Young bovine
8 Suspend
12 Commotion
13 Stench
14 Hydrox competitor
15 Haughty strutter
17 Split
18 Tar Heels' sch.
19 Move aimlessly
21 Sans elevator
24 Catcher's place?
25 Actress Gardner
26 Filch
28 Lucy's partner in mischief
32 Virtue's opposite
34 One of the Dwarfs
36 A handful
37 Plant swelling
39 — Mahal
41 Glutton
42 Shade provider
44 Mists
46 Bright at night
50 Charged bit
51 "— Lang Syne"
52 Sucker
56 Gilligan's home
57 Screenwriter James
58 Yoko of music
59 Out of power
60 Bleak, as a movie
61 Church seat

Down

1 Track circuit
2 Altar affirmative
3 Masses
4 Agree
5 N. modifier
6 Rich soil
7 Poultry purchase
8 Nasty nesters
9 Saharan
10 Actress Campbell
11 No stay-at-home
16 Squid squirt
20 Nay canceler
21 Greet silently
22 Eager
23 Spacecraft compartment
27 Automaton, for short
29 Dr. Seuss book
30 Persian Gulf noble
31 Stamina
33 Changed the text
35 Cleveland hoopster, for short
38 The whole enchilada
40 Cell overseer
43 Italian metropolis
45 Luau bowlful
46 Hotel employee
47 English river
48 Earthenware pot
49 Takeout request
53 Floral necklace
54 Individual
55 "Wham!"

▶ Yesterday's answer

T	A	B		C	A	R	R		A	M	E	N	
A	V	E		O	L	I	O		P	U	M	A	
L	E	A		B	I	G	L	E	A	G	U	E	
C	R	U	M	B			L	A	C				
			A	L	B	A		T	H	A	W	S	
B	I	G	D	E	A	L	S		E	R	I	N	
Y	O	U		R	I	O	T	S		A	K	A	
E	T	A	S		T	H	I	N	K	B	I	G	
S	A	M	O	A		A	R	I	A				
			F	L	U			G	N	O	M	E	
M	I	S	T	E	R	B	I	G		R	I	M	
B	L	U	E		D	A	T	E		S	K	I	
A	K	I	N		U	S	S	R		O	E	R	

Sudoku

3								9
			2		9			
	5	9	6		8	7	1	
	3			5			4	
2								5
	6			1			9	
	4	8	7		5	1	2	
			8		4			
7								6

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

1	4	7	8	6	9	3	2	5
2	8	5	4	3	7	9	6	1
3	9	6	1	5	2	4	7	8
6	5	2	9	8	3	1	4	7
7	1	8	5	2	4	6	9	3
9	3	4	7	1	6	5	8	2
5	2	9	3	4	8	7	1	6
4	6	1	2	7	5	8	3	9
8	7	3	6	9	1	2	5	4

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Maria, three years and counting baby. I love you more with each passing day. You will always be my undercover lover **XOX ROB**

To Jason B, You are amazing in every possible way. Your so sweet, and I want you to be mine. I loved you every since the first day I saw you. Forever & Always **XXXOOO PURPLELOVER =)**

Tiger, I love you so much I can't sleep without you next to me. We've been through a lot but we came out on top!! I love you baby, for all that you are, and all that you will ever be!! **LOVE, YOUR KITTY KAT**

Dear Brian, Please get better. I still think you look so sexy with the bike wounds. I love you so much. You're the best thing that's ever happened to me and I promise to you that I will never treat you less than amazing. **LOVE, DEBRA**

Today 3°/-2° Partly sunny
Friday 5°/0° Partly cloudy
The Weather Network Download WeatherEye to your smartphone.
TWN incorporates MSC data

Today's horoscope

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to play@metronews.ca

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 The planet Jupiter is giving you some big ideas but how will those ideas translate into practice? That is the question you must answer today. When you have answered it, act on it.

♉ Taurus April 21-May Focus only on positive things, because if you allow negative thoughts to get a hold in your head you will find it very hard to shake them off.

♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 You may encounter some hostility today, especially if you are the kind of Gemini to whom everything seems to come so easily. Not everyone has been blessed with your looks, intelligence and wit, so make allowances.

♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 You may not agree with people's opinions today but you must respect them. If you feel the need to criticize, you must do so in a civilized fashion. The idea is to win them over, not turn them totally against you.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23 No matter how honest you think someone is, you must not allow them to make your financial decisions. Once you give away that power, you may have a hard time getting it back.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22 You may find it hard to stay calm today, especially if people drag their feet. Maybe you should scream and shout a bit. If nothing else, it will make you feel better.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 A friend or colleague will take liberties today and, to put it mildly, you won't be too happy about it. They may think you're a bit of a killjoy but let them know you're not amused.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 If you get excited about something that is not important today, you run the risk of missing out on something that is. There's interesting distractions but there is only one thing that matters: making money.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 You may be full of yourself at the moment, but not everyone is as chirpy and chatty as you. That's okay though. Everyone you meet will end up smiling.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 Letting people know what you are thinking may not be such a good idea today. It may be common sense to you but it's really not that common.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 There's a lot of pressure on you at the moment but you are not the sort to crack easily. Whatever stressful situation you may find yourself in you know you've been there before. And you've handled it.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20 You may have to be cruel to be kind today, especially if a friend or family member is too caught up to see the bigger picture. There are higher issues at stake, so grab their attention. SALLY BROMPTON

Caption contest

DITA ALANGKATA/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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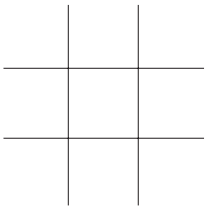
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Monster Mash. Help create a mythological creature.

Reader 1. Draw the head and neck.	
Reader 2. Draw the arms and torso.	
Reader 3. Draw hips and legs.	
Reader 4. Draw the feet.	

Tic Tac Team: Make either a 'x' or 'o' in one square then pass it on...



Instructions: After you're done reading this metro don't throw it out. Hand it to someone who fits the description below. Check the box and pass it on.

- ☐ **Reader 1.** Give to a man with a moustache.
- ☐ **Reader 2.** Give to someone wearing yellow.
- ☐ **Reader 3.** Give to a woman with a ponytail.
- ☐ **Reader 4.** Give to a person wearing a hat.

Collaborative cartoon - complete the speech bubbles in your respective box.



Reader 1.	Reader 2.	Reader 3.

Finished reading? Time to pass it on. What time is it?



Reader 1. Reader 2. Reader 3. Reader 4. Reader 5.



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